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**Multi-year programme of work of the United Nations
Forum on Forests****Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

The present report is intended to facilitate the development of the new multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the implementation of the non-legally binding international instrument on all types of forests to be adopted at the current session of the Forum.

Council resolution 2006/49 strengthened the international arrangement on forests with a number of new elements, including the four shared global objectives on forests and the decision to adopt a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests. The scope of the international arrangement on forests was broadened with the addition of three principal functions, to reflect the critical role of forests in the realization of internationally agreed development goals.

The multi-year programme of work of the Forum should reflect the overall purpose, functions and strategy of the international arrangement on forests. Accordingly, the new multi-year programme of work will include a description and scheduling of key tasks that it will undertake during the period 2007-2015, including policy issues for deliberation at each session and activities in intersessional periods. With its adoption, the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests will become the integral part of the multi-year programme of work. The report proposes a framework and suggested contents of the multi-year programme of work for the period 2007-2015.

* E/CN.18/2007/1.



I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Forum on Forests, as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council, operates under a multi-year programme of work. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, which established the Forum in 2000, the Forum adopted its multi-year programme of work for the period 2001-2005.¹ Subsequently, in resolution 2006/49² the Economic and Social Council decided that following the seventh session of the Forum in 2007, the Forum would meet biennially for a period of up to two weeks on the basis of a focused multi-year programme of work to be adopted by the Forum at its seventh session. Furthermore, in the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council decided that the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests would be reviewed in 2015.

2. Thus, the Forum, at its seventh session, is expected to adopt its multi-year programme of work, which would include a description and scheduling of the tasks that the Forum will undertake for the period 2007-2015, taking into account the relevant provisions of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49 and other relevant developments.

3. It should be noted that at its seventh session the Forum will conclude its deliberations and adopt a non-legally binding instrument for all types of forests that contains a clear reference to the multi-year programme of work for 2007-2015. It is, therefore, strongly suggested that the present report be read in close conjunction with the note on the non-legally binding instrument (E/CN.18/2007/3).

4. The report is intended to facilitate the deliberations of the Forum by providing relevant background information and a suggested framework for the multi-year programme of work for 2007-2015.

II. Considerations for the multi-year programme of work for 2007-2015

5. In the development of the multi-year programme of work for 2007-2015 for the consideration of the Forum, the overall purpose, functions and strategy of the international arrangement on forests have been clearly reflected. The programme of work also builds on the previous multi-year programme of work 2001-2005, recalling in particular paragraph 4 (g) of Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, in which it is stated that the multi-year programme of work of the Forum will draw on the elements reflected in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,³ the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests,⁴

¹ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 22 (E/2001/42/Rev.1, para. 26).*

² *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2006, Supplement No. 22 (E/2006/42, paras. 10 and 32).*

³ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution I, annex I.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, annex III.

chapter 11 of Agenda 21⁵ and the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF).

6. It will be recalled that in the multi-year programme of work for 2001-2005, the Forum at each session addressed the six principal functions of the international arrangement on forests, as stipulated in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35. In this regard, the Economic and Social Council, in paragraph 2 of its resolution 2006/49, agreed that the international arrangement on forests would perform the following additional principal functions for achievement of its main objective (such functions would therefore have to be reflected in the programming of the multi-year programme of work for 2007-2015):

(a) Enhance the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and to the implementation of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,⁶ bearing in mind the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development;⁷

(b) Encourage and assist countries, including those with low forest cover, to develop and implement forest conservation and rehabilitation strategies, increase the area of forests under sustainable management and reduce forest degradation and the loss of forest cover in order to maintain and improve their forest resources with a view to enhancing the benefits of forests to meet present and future needs, in particular the needs of indigenous peoples and local communities whose livelihoods depend on forests;

(c) Strengthen interaction between the United Nations Forum on Forests and relevant regional and subregional forest-related mechanisms, institutions and instruments, organizations and processes, with the participation of major groups, as identified in Agenda 21³ and relevant stakeholders to facilitate enhanced cooperation and effective implementation of sustainable forest management, as well as to contribute to the work of the Forum.

7. The first new principal function is a commitment to the broader global development agenda to which the Forum is expected to contribute through its work and which has been incorporated into the purpose of the draft text of the non-legally binding instrument. The other two new principal functions are geared more towards technical and institutional approaches to more effectively promote sustainable forest management at national, subregional and regional levels.

8. Furthermore, the Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 2006/49, also decided, with a view to achieving the main objective of the international arrangement on forests, to set the following shared global objectives on forests, and agreed to work globally and nationally to achieve those objectives by 2015.

⁵ Ibid., annex II.

⁶ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex, and resolution 2, annex.

⁷ *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

Global objectives on forests

Global objective 1

Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation;

Global objective 2

Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people;

Global objective 3

Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests;

Global objective 4

Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

9. The decision to work at the global and national levels to achieve the shared global objectives on forests by 2015 is a clear reaffirmation of the commitment to the international arrangement on forests. It is important to underline that the global objectives on forests were negotiated during the fifth session of the Forum and adopted at its sixth session, in the context of the deliberations on the need for a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests. Consequently, there is a general consensus among Member States on the need to reaffirm the global objectives on forests as a fundamental part of the instrument. Accordingly, the multi-year programme of work needs to be directed towards the achievement of those global objectives on forests.

Non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests

10. Consequent to the decision to develop a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, programming of this new element must be included in the multi-year programme of work, whose scope and frequency of review are to be determined. Upon consideration of the scope of the instrument, which is envisaged to be adopted at the seventh session of the Forum, it should be borne in mind that the instrument will be inextricably linked to the work of the Forum, which will serve as the governing body of the instrument, and it is expected to provide the policy and conceptual framework for focused international cooperation and national measures towards achieving sustainable forest management and the global objectives on forests.

11. The outcome of the open-ended ad hoc expert group meeting, held in New York from 11 to 15 December 2006, on the possible content of the instrument, suggests that the instrument will be the key vehicle for translating policies developed by the Forum into action. The ad hoc expert group indicated its general support for the Forum to be given the role of governing body for oversight of the

implementation of the instrument. The Forum secretariat might also act as the secretariat of the instrument and manage any trust fund designated for it. However, the exact relationship between the instrument and the Forum, and thus its multi-year programme of work, will be clear only upon adoption of the instrument, when its scope and working modalities will be determined.

Change in working modality of the Forum

12. The decision of the Forum to meet biennially after its seventh session would entail certain adjustments to the institutional and operational aspects of its work programme. It would be important to consider carefully how the Forum organizes its work programme in the light of the biennial sessions and the expanded principal functions of the international arrangement on forests, which further strengthened the role of the Forum on the global forest policy process.

13. Following its seventh session, the Forum will be meeting at biennial sessions in 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015. The Forum session in 2015 will be devoted essentially to a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests, including a full range of options, pursuant to paragraph 32 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/49. Only the three sessions in 2009, 2011 and 2013 will provide opportunities to deliberate on the substantive issues under the principal functions of the international arrangement on forests. This temporal/logistic aspect should be considered in the design of its multi-year programme of work. With the biennial cycle of its sessions, it would follow that the Bureau of a session will have a two-year term of office, of which the office bearers must be made aware.

Regional involvement

14. The Economic and Social Council emphasized in its resolution 2006/49, *inter alia*, the need to strengthen interaction between the Forum and the regional forest-related entities, including focused inputs from regions to the Forum, which adds an important dimension to the work of the Forum, and reflects the repeated emphasis placed by Member States to bring global policy dialogue closer to actual implementation on the ground. The strengthening of the global-regional interface is expected to enhance the feedback of policy development, country-level implementation and lessons learned through a critical link that regional and subregional entities can provide. The regional element would also provide a platform for countries and other players in the region to coordinate and collaborate in the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument and to follow-up the outcomes of the global sessions, as well as in highlighting regional priorities and concerns.

15. At past sessions, the Forum has promoted the regional dimension by holding special events, such as panel discussions on specific regions, to learn regional perspectives and experiences. With the decision to strengthen regional involvement, what is needed now is a more dedicated effort to increase awareness, engagement and contributions from various regional actors to the Forum at its sessions.

16. Relevant regional organizations and processes include regional commissions of the United Nations, the regional forestry commissions of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the regional ministerial meetings on the environment of the United Nations Environment Programme, the

Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe process, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, the Central American Convention on Forests, the African Timber Organization, the Committee on Forests and Woodlands of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, the Conférence des Ministres en Charge des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Tehran Process, the Asia Forest Partnership, the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, the regional development banks, the regional criteria and indicators processes and the regional forest law enforcement and governance processes, among others.

Strengthened political commitment and enhanced cooperation

17. The multi-year programme of work for 2001-2005 had as key components high-level ministerial segments, dialogues with heads of international organizations, including the member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, as called for in Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, and multi-stakeholder dialogues. The high-level segment was aimed at strengthening political commitment to sustainable forest management, and enhanced cooperation, policy and programme coordination and inter-agency collaboration to advance the main objective of the international arrangement on forests.

18. The role of members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in facilitating policy implementation has been important and recognized in various resolutions and decisions of the Forum. Multi-stakeholder dialogues have provided an important vehicle to promote stakeholder engagement in policy debate. Participation of major groups has also enriched the deliberations with useful and important civil society perspectives on the assessment of overall progress. It was decided in paragraph 12 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/49 that the Forum would seek to strengthen interaction with major groups and other stakeholders in meetings of the Forum. The aforementioned activities could usefully continue to be included in the multi-year programme of work. The resolutions also recognized the positive contributions of the country-led initiatives to the work of the Forum, and encouraged interested Governments to organize such initiatives on topical issues of the multi-year programme of work.

19. Ad hoc expert groups that were convened under the previous multi-year programme of work have effectively assisted the work of the Forum, particularly in providing scientific and technical advice on key issues. Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/49 emphasized, *inter alia*, that ad hoc expert groups could be convened to address issues identified in the multi-year programme of work. It would be necessary, therefore, to identify the topics and scope of such ad hoc expert groups in the programming of the new multi-year programme of work.

Economic and Social Council and the broader development agenda

20. By its resolution 61/16, on strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly emphasized the enhanced implementation of actions towards the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and the coordinated contribution to the Economic and Social Council from its subsidiary bodies on its assessment of the progress. Of direct concern to the Forum are the two new functions of the Economic and Social Council, *viz.*, the annual ministerial reviews of the United Nations development

agenda and the biennial Development Cooperation Forum on the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

21. The Forum is required to provide contributions to the Economic and Social Council for its annual ministerial review and biennial Development Cooperation Forum. This offers a critical opportunity to the Forum to integrate its work more effectively with the broader development agenda, which is also one of the new principal functions of the international arrangement on forests, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/49. In 2015, the General Assembly will review the achievement of the development goals, particularly the Millennium Development Goals. Coincidentally, in 2015 the Forum will undertake a review of the international arrangement on forests and the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, and thus it will have an opportunity to highlight its contributions to the broader development goals. In this connection, it would be critical for the Forum to develop a strategy and establish appropriate channels to provide meaningful contributions to the Economic and Social Council for the annual ministerial review and the Development Cooperation Forum. Developing synergy and mainstreaming its work with that of the Economic and Social Council on activities related to the broader development goals must be included in the multi-year programme of work. This could only further strengthen the role of the Forum as an important body of the Economic and Social Council.

International Year of Forests 2011

22. Underscoring the significance of forests to global sustainable development and to ameliorate climatic and other environmental stresses faced by planet Earth, the General Assembly, in its resolution 61/193, declared 2011 the International Year of Forests, and requested the Forum secretariat to act as the focal point for the successful implementation of the International Year of Forests. Activities organized as part of the International Year will focus on raising awareness and promoting global action to sustainably manage, conserve and develop all types of forests, including trees outside of forests. This important endeavour will require careful planning and programming, and should be incorporated into the design of the multi-year programme of work.

Lessons learned from the previous multi-year programme of work 2001-2005

23. The multi-year programme of work for 2001-2005 was the result of intensive deliberations to chart the work of the Forum immediately after its establishment as a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council. It was adopted at the first session of the Forum, in February 2001, and essentially consisted of: (a) an assessment of progress in the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action; (b) a recurring theme of means of implementation (finance, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and capacity-building); (c) a number of recurring common items; (d) periodic high-level segments and dialogue with the heads of the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests; (e) multi-stakeholder dialogue; and (f) review of progress and future actions, review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and consideration of the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework.

24. However, although the multi-year programme of work for 2001-2005 comprehensively covered the issues set for a particular session of the Forum, it also resulted in inflexibility in the course of deliberations. The deliberations had to focus mainly on the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, and there was a constant undercurrent of a politically sensitive issue related to the consideration of the possible parameters of a legal framework at the fifth session of the Forum.

25. The overburdening agenda of the Forum sessions under the previous multi-year programme of work made it difficult to address new and emerging issues. It also limited the ways in which the Forum could effectively address annual themes of the Economic and Social Council and other pressing broader development issues.

26. Concerns were raised on the lack of or only nominal deliberations on critical issues such as means of implementation; for example, finance and common items such as trade, national forest programmes and enabling environment.

27. It may be perceived that the Forum in its deliberations has been preoccupied with negotiations on the text of resolutions and that insufficient attention has been paid to facilitating implementation and assessment of sustainable forest management at the ground level. Despite the attention to the resolutions, there was no mechanism to follow up on the resolutions. An unintended consequence was insufficient oversight of the principal functions of the international arrangement on forests and its objectives. With the conclusion of the negotiation of the non-legally binding international instrument on all types of forests, which will serve as the principal vehicle for implementing sustainable forest management, the Forum will turn its focus to assessing and improving implementation.

28. The above-mentioned may be usefully taken into consideration when designing ways to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of the Forum. For instance, the high-level ministerial segment could be made more influential in its role of expressing political commitment and showcasing concrete actions, and the multi-stakeholder dialogues could be further broadened in scope to provide opportunities for a meaningful engagement in policy development and implementation feedback.

29. The full potential of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests has yet to be harnessed. While the Partnership has proved itself to be an innovative inter-agency collaborative mechanism to support the work of the Forum and enhance cooperation among its members, its potential in the provision of assistance to Member States in promoting sustainable forest management should be further realized.

30. In view of the above, the Forum may wish to consider the following elements in the design of the multi-year programme of work for 2007-2015:

- (a) A focus on implementation;
- (b) Clarity regarding expected outputs;
- (c) Influence and decisiveness on issues being addressed;
- (d) Practicality and flexibility in the aims and objectives;
- (e) Adaptability to changing needs.

Multi-year programmes of work of other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council

31. All functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council operate under multi-year programmes of work, with a wide variation in scope and detail. In response to General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, which, *inter alia*, requested functional commissions to examine their methods of work in order to better pursue the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, several functional commissions have reviewed their working methods in recent years.

32. Following is a summary of characteristics and trends in the multi-year programme of work of functional commissions and subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council:

(a) A number of functional commissions and subsidiary bodies⁸ have adopted a two-year cycle model with implementation review and policy sessions held during intervening years. Generally, a Chairman's summary is produced during the implementation review session and a negotiated text, such as a resolution, is produced at the policy session;

(b) During a cycle, therefore at the implementation review and policy sessions, there is a focus on one or a limited number of priority themes;

(c) The Commission on Sustainable Development holds an intergovernmental preparatory meeting (five days) during the policy session;

(d) The Commission on the Status of Women focuses, at each session, on a priority theme and on an evaluation of progress in the implementation of the recommended actions of the preceding session. The Commission organizes panel events for preliminary discussions on the priority theme for the next Commission session, and its Bureau decides on an emerging issue for consideration at the next session;

(e) Most bodies meet annually, with the session duration ranging from four to ten days;

(f) Several commissions hold panel discussions with the United Nations regional commissions as part of their sessions. The Commission on Sustainable Development holds regional implementation meetings in collaboration with the regional commissions, prior to its review session.

Emerging priority issues

33. Effective ways to conduct policy deliberations on relevant emerging priority issues should be factored into the design of the multi-year programme of work for 2007-2015. The Forum may be more dynamic and relevant in addressing emerging priority issues, such as the Asian tsunami of 2004 and the impact on coastal forests and habitations, with necessary flexibility built into the multi-year programme of work.

⁸ For example, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Commission on Social Development, the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

34. A number of issues have emerged in the past few years that merit attention, inter alia, forest governance, including combating illegal activities in forests and associated international trade; forests and conflict; forests and genetically modified trees; forests and water; forests and climate change; forests and energy; urban and community forests; forest tenure issues; and new trends in certification. The reports of the Secretary-General prepared for the third and fourth sessions of the Forum highlighted a number of other emerging issues that have not been properly addressed.

III. Proposed multi-year programme of work

35. With the inclusion of the global objectives on forests and the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, the Forum has broadened the scope of the principal functions of the international arrangement on forests. Consequently, there will be an increase in associated activities and resources requirements.

36. Table 1 below provides suggested elements of a multi-year programme of work for consideration. Additionally, annex I provides a schematic overview of the key components of the international arrangement on forests, including the main objectives of the arrangement, four global objectives on forests, and nine principal functions, based on Economic and Social Council resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49. Annex II provides the basic architecture of the proposed multi-year programme of work.

Global objectives as the basis

37. The four global objectives on forests agreed upon at the sixth session of the Forum and adopted by the Council in its resolution 2006/49 are significant milestones in the international commitment on sustainable forest management. Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/49 reaffirmed that the main objective of the international arrangement on forests was to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to that end,⁹ and that the four shared global objectives were intended to help achieve this main aim and to contribute to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in particular, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability. Member States have agreed to work at global and national levels to make progress towards the achievement of these global objectives by 2015 through the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument.

38. In assessing progress in implementing the main objective of the international arrangement on forests, it is necessary to take into account the above four global objectives on forests, including the contribution of forests to the internationally agreed development goals. Because of the centrality of global objectives, the new multi-year programme of work should be based primarily on these objectives. Related to this central focus is the need to incorporate all nine principal functions of the international arrangement on forests into its multi-year programme of work.

39. The seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management provide a well-established reference framework for the articulation and the monitoring, assessment

⁹ Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35, para. 1.

and reporting of sustainable forest management. The global objectives on forests, in their own right, as the overall policy engine, serve to carry the seven thematic elements towards the achievement of our ultimate goal of sustainable forest management.

Session themes

40. In accordance with Council resolution 2006/49, each session of the Forum should have a specific thematic focus. It is proposed that these themes be based on the global objectives on forests. At each Forum session, one of the first three global objectives could be considered in depth. Global objective 4, which relates to reversing the decline in official development assistance and mobilizing significantly increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management, may be considered at each session. The session in 2015 will be devoted to the review of the international arrangement on forests and the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests.

41. The implementation of the non-legally binding international instrument on all types of forests is expected to feature prominently in the sessions of the Forum. To this end, a review of progress on the substantive, institutional and financial aspects of the instrument should be considered. This would be particularly relevant in the event that a global financial mechanism is established to support the implementation of the instrument. In this context, relevant substantive issues of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, upon conclusion, should be taken into consideration in the multi-year programme of work.

42. On this basis, the substantive themes and their potential topics for the sessions could be broadly identified as follows:

Eighth session (2009): "Forests for development"

- (a) Climate change and forests, particularly mitigation by reversing deforestation;
- (b) Rehabilitation and restoration of the world's forests;
- (c) Energy and forests;
- (d) Water and forests;
- (e) Financial resources.

Ninth session (2011): "Forests for people and livelihoods"

- (a) Forest governance;
- (b) Forests for peacebuilding and in conflict resolution;
- (c) Urban and community-based forest management;
- (d) Awareness-building (International Year of Forests 2011) and education;
- (e) Payment for environmental services;
- (f) Mid-term review.

Tenth session (2013): "Forests for growth"

- (a) Forest products processing, non-timber forest products;

- (b) Trade, investment, employment and labour;
- (c) Forest tenure;
- (d) Nature-based tourism and environmental services.

Eleventh session (2015): review

- (a) Review of the achievement of global objectives on forests;
- (b) Review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests;
- (c) Review of the contribution of forests to internationally agreed development goals;
- (d) Consideration of options for the future.

Intersessional period

Intergovernmental expert meetings

43. There is much scope and legitimate need to efficiently utilize the periods between the biennial sessions of the Forum, as there are only three sessions to effectively address substantive issues and challenges and then take far-reaching decisions on future options in 2015. No opportunity should be missed and no time lost in mobilizing resources, engaging actors and stakeholders, and in keeping the momentum going.

44. Given these challenges, it is strongly proposed that one intergovernmental expert meeting be convened each year the Forum sessions are not held. The main purpose of these intergovernmental expert meetings would be the following:

- (a) To review the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests;
- (b) To provide an interface for interregional dialogue and inputs from the regional organizations, processes and stakeholders;
- (c) To engage the representatives of the member States in preliminary discussions on the thematic issues of the following session of the Forum;
- (d) To provide inputs to the Economic and Social Council annual ministerial review in the years when sessions of the Forum are not convened.

45. Under the theme "Review of the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests", the intergovernmental expert meeting would: (a) review the status of implementation at all levels; (b) consider ways and means to facilitate implementation and exchange views on further actions; and (c) provide inputs to sessions of the Forum.

46. In order to strengthen regional involvement in the global Forum process, it is essential to incorporate regional segments in the most effective manner. The proposed expert meeting would: (a) provide a much needed common platform for interregional dialogue and interface to regional and subregional forest-relevant entities to share regional experiences and challenges on sustainable forest management; (b) review common strategies and joint initiatives, partnerships and other approaches; and (c) provide consolidated input to the sessions of the Forum.

Such an expert meeting would provide an opportunity for focused dialogues on regional issues involving all regional partners and to share lessons learned and case studies from countries of the regions, as well as provide a mechanism to receive inputs from and provide policy feedback to participating regional bodies and processes.

47. The proposed intergovernmental expert meeting would be instrumental in advancing preliminary discussions on the thematic issues of the next session of the Forum. Such preliminary discussions would: (a) raise awareness of the issues for policy deliberations; and (b) provide more substantial and coherent input to the session of the Forum.

48. An intergovernmental expert meeting would provide a mechanism for contributing to the Economic and Social Council annual ministerial reviews in the years when sessions of the Forum are not held. It should be borne in mind that, owing to the biennial nature of the Forum session, without its intersessional intergovernmental meeting, the Forum would not be able to provide input to the annual ministerial review. It is crucial that the Forum stay engaged in the Council's new activities and provide its constructive inputs related to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals.

Ad hoc expert groups and/or task forces

49. As a dynamic global policy body, the Forum would need to stay on the cutting edge on all relevant matters, thus requiring in-depth scientific and technical support on specific topics. Such support can be provided through ad hoc expert groups, task forces and other similar subsidiary bodies.

50. Ad hoc expert groups and task forces could help sort and streamline the work of the Forum, by promoting the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests. Following are some areas that may require consideration by expert groups:

- (a) Development of a global funding mechanism for sustainable forest management;
- (b) Approaches to strengthen regional-global interface on forests;
- (c) Indicators for global objectives on forests;
- (d) Clustering and synthesis of the IPF and IFF proposals for action and resolutions of the Forum according to the seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management.

Country-led initiatives

51. Country-led initiatives on specific issues have proved to be invaluable input to the work of the Forum at past sessions. The Forum, through its new multi-year programme of work, should continue to encourage such initiatives focused on specific thematic and/or emerging and priority issues of the Forum.

Monitoring, assessment and reporting

52. Monitoring, assessment and reporting features as an important element of the Forum, and the non-legally binding international instrument for sustainable forest

management under development constitutes a particularly important function of the Forum. Monitoring, assessment and reporting has a central role in the multi-year programme of work for a number of reasons, including:

- (a) To assess progress in the implementation of the instrument and progress towards the achievement of sustainable forest management and the four global objectives on forests;
- (b) To assess progress in achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;
- (c) To compile the information provided by countries on a voluntary basis on progress made in implementing national measures towards achieving the four global objectives on forests;
- (d) To consolidate the reports provided by members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests on initiatives and activities undertaken in support of the work of the Forum and the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument;
- (e) To review the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and the non-legally binding instrument in 2015.

53. In order to measure progress in the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument and in achieving the global objectives on forests, it is necessary to compile consolidated reports on a periodic basis. To minimize the reporting burden on countries, and allow for a reasonable period between reports, preparation of consolidated global reports could be set for 2011 and 2015. This would build on the regular FAO Global Forest Resources Assessments, which capture the situation within countries. Further reports on sustainable forest management are expected to be provided by the criteria and indicators processes. The basis of these two sets of reporting are the following seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management:

- (a) Extent of forest resources;
- (b) Forest biological diversity;
- (c) Forest health and vitality;
- (d) Productive functions of forest resources;
- (e) Protective functions of forest resources;
- (f) Socio-economic functions of forests;
- (g) Legal, policy and institutional framework.

54. Depending upon the requirement of the new non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, upon its adoption, it may be necessary to clearly identify the type of information sought and the frequency of country reporting needed, while minimizing the reporting burden on countries. This is an issue that could be addressed through an ad hoc expert group.

Enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination

55. The Forum would need to continue and further enhance its cooperation and coordination function with all relevant organizations, institutions and instruments in regard to the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and previously agreed forest policy actions and programmes. Important

among these are the follow-up decisions by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests members of the Forum, providing guidance and receiving periodic inputs from the Partnership. The existing practice of annual reports by the Partnership and periodic dialogue between ministers responsible for forests and heads of Partnership member organizations have provided useful feedback to the Forum. To maintain momentum and mobilize greater cooperation and coordination, the Forum may wish to consider inviting and involving the Chairs of the governing councils of the member organizations of the Partnership more closely in Forum sessions. This would also facilitate the delivery of consistent messages from member States of different Partnership member organizations with regard to forests and the Forum.

56. Other related issues include:

(a) Making high-level segments more interesting: it would be necessary to schedule high-level segments at the ninth session in 2011, which will coincide with the International Year of Forests, and at the eleventh session in 2015;

(b) Developing a mechanism to provide timely and focused inputs to the Economic and Social Council and other relevant bodies, including the Commission on Sustainable Development at its 2012-2013 cycle;

(c) Developing more coherent policies and programmes with partners, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, at global and regional levels.

Stakeholder engagement

57. The continued working relationship with and contributions by major groups, as identified in Agenda 21, to the work of the Forum, in particular through the multi-stakeholder dialogues, have been highly appreciated by member States. This practice needs to be continued, and new approaches are needed to further enhance stakeholder engagement in policy deliberations and implementation at global, regional and national levels. Council resolution 2006/49 specifically invites the participation of major groups at regional processes and Forum sessions and in the non-legally binding instrument. Broadening the involvement of grassroots-level major groups organizations at regional and national levels would help further the achievement of the global objectives on forests.

58. At the same time, increasing communications with the public in general on forest-related issues would help to raise awareness and foster knowledge exchange.

International Year of Forests, 2011

59. The Forum secretariat has been tasked by the General Assembly to serve as the focal point for the implementation of the International Year of Forests, 2011, and the new multi-year programme of work needs to incorporate this important new responsibility entrusted to the Forum and its secretariat. The International Year of Forests, 2011 presents a significant opportunity to raise awareness on the importance of sustainable forest management and to address the critical links between forest issues and the global environment, public safety and overall sustainability. A well-planned and coordinated campaign on the Year would serve as a call to action to the global community to work together with member States, relevant forest-related organizations and major groups in support of sustainable forest management efforts worldwide. Thus, the multi-year programme of work should have a clear provision for this important task.

Cross-cutting and enabling issues

60. The multi-year programme of work needs to appropriately and effectively address a wide range of cross-cutting and enabling issues at its sessions and during the intersessional activities. Most notably, such issues may include the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, capacity-building, research and development, international trade-related issues, South-South and triangular cooperation, and clearinghouse mechanisms.

Review in 2015

61. The Forum should devote the whole eleventh session in 2015 to review of the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and the non-legally binding instrument, and, on that basis, should consider a full range of options as referred to in paragraph 32 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/49.

IV. Conclusions

62. The Forum is at a critical juncture in charting a way forward to translate into action the vision and expectations of the international community by enhanced promotion of sustainable forest management and by contributing significantly to the broader development agenda.

63. Council resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49 and General Assembly resolution 61/163, on commemorating 2011 as the International Year of Forests, provide reference frameworks for the development of the multi-year programme of work.

V. Proposed decision

64. The Forum may wish to decide on the multi-year programme of work as presented in table 1.

Table 1

Schedule for multi-year programme of work

Budget cycle	Biennium 2008-09		Biennium 2010-11		Biennium 2012-13		Biennium 2014-15	
Category	Forests for development (Global objectives 1 and 4)		Forests for people and livelihoods (Global objectives 2 and 4)		Forests for growth (Global objectives 3 and 4)		Review on progress Consideration of future actions	
Sessions/between the sessions	Intergovernmental expert meeting 1 (IGEM-1)	Eighth session	Intergovernmental expert meeting 2 (IGEM-2)	Ninth session	Intergovernmental expert meeting 3 (IGEM-3)	Tenth session	Intergovernmental expert meeting 4 (IGEM-4)	Eleventh session
Year (location)	2008 (Bangkok ESCAP)	2009 (New York UNHQ)	2010 (Addis Ababa ECA)	2011 (New York UNHQ)	2012 (Geneva ECE)	2013 (New York UNHQ)	2014 (Santiago ECLAC)	2015 (New York UNHQ)
ECOSOC matters: AMR and DCF	Input to ECOSOC	Input to ECOSOC	Input to ECOSOC	Input to ECOSOC	Input to ECOSOC	Input to ECOSOC	Input to ECOSOC	Input to ECOSOC
Emerging and priority issues	Regional dialogues and input	1. Climate change and forests 2. Energy and forests 3. Water and forests	Input to IVF 2011 Regional dialogues and input	1. Forest governance 2. Forests and conflict resolution 3. Awareness-building	Input to CSD (2012-2013 cycle) Regional dialogues and input	1. Forest ownership 2. Land-use 3. Forest employment	Regional dialogues and input	
Cross-cutting issues	Trade, TEST, capacity-building	Trade, TEST, capacity-building	Trade, TEST, capacity-building	Trade, TEST, capacity-building	Trade, TEST, capacity-building	Trade, TEST, capacity-building	Trade, TEST, capacity-building	
Non-legally binding instrument	Implementation and review	Review	Implementation and review	Review	Implementation and review	Review	Implementation and review	Review
High-level segment				HLS — message to ECOSOC and CSD (2012-13)				High-level segment
Enhanced cooperation, policy/programme coordination	Regional dialogues and input	Invitation to Chairs of governing bodies of the CPF members to address and inform the Forum	Regional dialogues and input	Invitation to Chairs of governing bodies of the CPF members to address and inform the Forum	Regional dialogues and input	Invitation to Chairs of governing bodies of the CPF members to address and inform the Forum		
		Cross-sectoral coordination with energy and water sectors	Cross-sectoral coordination with governance-related sectors	Cross-sectoral coordination with governance-related sectors		Cross-sectoral coordination with agriculture sector		
		Guidance to CPF	Guidance to CPF	Guidance to CPF		Guidance to CPF		

Budget cycle	Biennium 2008-09	Biennium 2010-11	Biennium 2012-13	Biennium 2014-15
Themes ☐ Category	Forests for development (Global objectives 1 and 4)	Forests for people and livelihoods (Global objectives 2 and 4)	Forests for growth (Global objectives 3 and 4)	Review on progress Consideration of future actions
Monitoring, assessment and reporting	Country reports	Mid-term review Country reports	Country reports	Country reports
Stakeholder engagement	Major groups coordination Multi-stakeholder dialogue	Major groups coordination Multi-stakeholder dialogue	Major groups coordination Multi-stakeholder dialogue	Major groups coordination Multi-stakeholder dialogue
International Year of Forests (2011)	Preparations for IYF 2011 Preparations for IYF 2011	Preparations for IYF 2011 Launch of IYF 2011	Assessment of IYF outcome	

Note: The following abbreviations have been used to save space and to fit information in the table:

AMR annual ministerial review
 CPF Collaborative Partnerships on Forests
 CSD Commission on Sustainable Development
 DCF Development Cooperation Forum
 ECOSOC Economic and Social Council
 ECA Economic Commission for Africa
 ECE Economic Commission for Europe
 ECLAC Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
 ESCAP Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
 HLS high-level segment
 IYF International Year of Forests, 2011
 TEST transfer of environmentally sound technologies
 UNHQ United Nations Headquarters

Scheme of the international arrangement on forests

Main objective and purpose of the United Nations Forum on Forests, supported by CPF — ECOSOC resolution 2000/35

The main objective of the international arrangement on forests is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to this end. The purpose of such an international arrangement is to promote the implementation of internationally agreed actions on forests, at the national, regional and global levels, to provide a coherent, transparent and participatory global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development, and to carry out principal functions, based on the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, ... the ["Forest Principles"], chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the IPF/IFF process, in a manner consistent with and complementary to existing international legally binding instruments relevant to forests.

Global objectives on forests (2015) — ECOSOC resolution 2006/49

1. Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide
2. Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving managed forests, and increase the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests.
3. Increase significantly the areas of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, and increase the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests.
4. Reverse the decline in official development assistance for SFM and mobilize significantly increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

Principal functions of the United Nations Forum on Forests, supported by CPF — ECOSOC resolution 2000/35 and ECOSOC resolution 2006/49

- | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| 1. Facilitate and promote implementation of the IPF/IFF PfAs* as well as other actions ..., including through nfp and other integrated programmes ... | 2. Provide a forum for continued policy dialogue among Governments ..., to foster common understanding on SFM and to address forest-related issues and emerging areas of priority concern in a holistic, comprehensive and integrated manner ... | 3. Enhance cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional ... as contribute to synergies among them, including coordination among donors; | 4. Foster international cooperation, including North-South and public-private partnerships, as well as cross-sectoral cooperation at the national, regional and global levels; | 5. Monitor and assess progress at the national, regional and global levels through reporting by Governments, as well as by international and regional ... <i>[entities]</i> * ... and on this basis consider future actions needed; | 6. Strengthen commitment to SFM ... through engagement, the development of governing bodies of international and regional ... <i>[entities]</i> * ... and the promotion of action-oriented dialogue and policy formulation related to forests; | 7. Enhance the contribution of forests to the achievement of the agreed internationally development goals ... | 8. Encourage and assist countries, ... to develop and implement forest conservation and rehabilitation strategies, increase the area of forests under sustainable management, and reduce forest degradation and the loss of forest cover, in order to maintain and improve their forest resources ... | 9. Strengthen interaction between the Forum and relevant regional and subregional forest-related mechanisms, institutions and organizations, with processes, with participation of major groups, ... and relevant stakeholders to facilitate enhanced cooperation and effective implementation of SFM, as well as to contribute to the work of the Forum. |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|---|---|

*Note: The following abbreviations have been used to save space and to fit information in the table:

CPF = Collaborative Partnerships on Forests

ECOSOC = Economic and Social Council

*[entities]** = "organizations, institutions and instruments"

["Forest Principles"] = the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests

IPF/IFF = The Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/The Intergovernmental Forum on Forests

nfp = national forest programmes

PfAs = Proposals for Actions

SFM = sustainable forest management

Annex II

Basic architecture of the proposed United Nations Forum on Forests multi-year programme of work

*Sessions**Intersessionals***Eighth (2009), ninth (2011) and tenth (2013)**

Scope

- Theme-specific sessions^a
- Enhanced cooperation, coordination, guidance to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)
- Review of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests implementation
- Emerging issues
- Monitoring, assessment and reporting — country reports, etc.
- Inputs from intergovernmental expert meetings
- Inputs from other intersessional activities/initiatives
- High-level segment (in 2011 and 2015)
- Inputs to the Economic and Social Council annual ministerial reviews and the Development Cooperation Forums
- Multi-stakeholder dialogues
- Input to the Economic and Social Council, annual ministerial reviews and Development Cooperation Forum
- International Year of Forests (IYF) 2011
 - Preparations (2009)
 - Launching (2011)
 - Assessment (2013)

Duration and venues

1. Two weeks
2. United Nations Headquarters (New York/ Geneva)

Expected outputs

1. Negotiated text
 - (a) Policy development and guidance
 - (b) Inputs to annual ministerial reviews and Development Cooperation Forum
 - (c) Input to Commission on Sustainable Development (2012-13)
2. Chairman's text
 - (a) Multi-stakeholder dialogue

Intergovernmental expert meetings (IGEMs) in 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014

Purpose

1. Implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests
2. Interregional dialogue and global-regional interface
3. Preliminary discussions on themes of upcoming regular sessions
4. Inputs to Economic and Social Council annual ministerial reviews on the years when Forum regular sessions are not held

Duration and venues

1. Seven days
2. Regional commissions headquarters

Expected outputs

1. Chairman's summary for items 1, 2 and 3 above
2. Negotiated text for item 4 above (for annual ministerial reviews)

Sessions

Intersessionals

Eleventh (2015)

- ☐ Review
- ☐ Consideration of future action (review all options, including a legally binding instrument)
- ☐ High-level segment
- ☐ Input to Economic and Social Council annual ministerial reviews and Development Cooperation Forum

Other intersessional activities (as per need)

- ☐ Ad hoc expert groups
- ☐ Country-led initiatives
- ☐ Self-organizing regional and subregional meetings
- ☐ Major groups consultations

^a See table 1 for themes and other details.